

TAKING POSSESSION OF OUR INHERITANCE

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A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.”
Joshua 1:2, 3.

UNDER the leadership of Moses the children of Israel had been journeying towards the land of promise. Owing to their waywardness, what might have been done in less than a month occupied many years. They wandered up and down in the wilderness, sometimes close on the border of their inheritance and other times lost in the great desert. Alas, many of God's people are still in this unsatisfactory condition—they have come out of Egypt—the depths have swallowed up their adversaries and they are on the way to the promised heritage. But they have not yet entered into rest. They will, we trust, ultimately reach the peace of God which passes all understanding, for they have sufficient faith to prove them to be God's people and therefore, the Lord will surely bring them in. But, assuredly, they make a great deal of marching for very small progress. For lack of faith they go about when, with a step, they might possess the promised Canaan.

Today my earnest prayer and desire is that going towards the promised heritage may come to an end with you this day and you may enter into heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus by an immediate act of faith. I want the Lord's people so to persevere in their seeking, by divine strength, that they may get out of the great and terrible wilderness and come to Mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem and enter into their heritage, according to that word, “We which have believed do enter into rest.” Our friends have come as far as that first verse of our Lord's invitation, “Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.” And they have a measure of that rest which comes of pardoned sin and confidence in Jesus. The pity is that they have not advanced to His next word of exhortation, “Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; and you shall find rest unto your souls.” This is a rest discovered and enjoyed through willing service—“You shall find rest unto your souls.” Many people are saved in one sense but in another sense they are seeking salvation. Oh that we may come to be saved in *every* sense—may salvation be ours in the broadest, widest, deepest, highest meaning of that blessed word! May we not only be saved *from* but saved *to*! Saved *from sin*—that makes us safe; saved *to holiness*—that makes us happy. May we realize our completeness in Christ this day and cease from the wanderings of fear! It is time that we took possession of that goodly heritage which the Lord has made our own, for in Christ Jesus “we have obtained an inheritance” and have the earnest of it in our possession of the Spirit of God. hear the watchword of the morning, you that have tarried long enough in the wilderness—“Arise, go over this Jordan”! If I read the whole verse it is a command to myself—“Arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.”

For our help in this desirable step, first let us take a survey of the inheritance. Secondly, let us glance at the title deeds. And thirdly, let us make a move towards taking immediate possession. For all this may the Holy Spirit make us sufficient!

I. First LET US TAKE A SURVEY OF THE INHERITANCE. I cannot carry you to the top of Pisgah. And if I could, you would probably reckon that you ought to die there. Your time has not yet come for that journey to the sky—but I would invite you to view the purchased possession with the eye of an enlightened understanding and then to cross over the Jordan of indecision to possess the country.

I would say of this inheritance which God has prepared for His saints and has given to them by a covenant of salt that it is exceedingly broad. We read here in this Book of Joshua, “From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.” These people did not conquer all the country but were content with the narrow bounds of Canaan. They began their enterprise bravely but soon showed a contracted spirit. Moses, in the 34th chapter of Numbers, which is well worthy of careful reading, gave them a little map or ordnance survey of the inner country which they were commanded to conquer and out of which they were to drive the inhabitants with the edge of the sword. The various races of Canaanites had brought upon themselves the curse of a righteous God. Their existence upon the face of God’s earth had become a calamity to mankind by reason of their horrible vices. They were doomed to utter extinction by the justice of God, as other races have been whose story blackens history records. The Israelites were appointed to be their executioners. But they did not accomplish their task—after a little while they began to make treaties and marriages with the doomed people and their intended victims became thorns in their sides. Outside of these Canaanite nations were greater territories which stretched right away from the Lebanon ranges down to the border of Egypt and as far east as the great river Euphrates, from whose banks their fathers came. This large domain was never altogether conquered by Israel although David possessed a large portion of it, and Solomon still more. The people of these wide regions were not so far gone in evil as the degraded tribes of Canaan, and so they were to be spared, if they submitted to the sway of Israel. Even the inner kingdom Israel did not wholly subdue—and the wider region it left for centuries untouched.

Beloved, this is a sadly correct picture of what happens to numbers of God’s people today. The inheritance that God has given us to enjoy in Christ Jesus is exceedingly broad. But we limit ourselves; all that we can think or desire is ours in the covenant of grace. There are immeasurable breadths and lengths, but we confine ourselves to close quarters. Truly “there is very much land yet to be possessed”! Some divine graces you must have or you are not saved. Some sins must at once be driven out of your life at the sword’s point or you are not the Lord’s. As for the choicer graces—you are foolish, indeed, if you think of doing without them! And as for the less violent *sins*—you err greatly if you spare one of them. The deep knowledge, the spiritual experience, the high joy, the extreme delight, and the heavenly communion which fall to the lot of certain of the saints should be enjoyed by us all. There is no reason why one should miss them, for if they have but faith enough to grasp all that God gives, they have full permission to do so. The Lord may truly say to us, “You are not straitened in Me, but you are straitened in your own heart.” We are petty princelings when we might have an imperial inheritance.

Just let me show what I mean. When we at first come to Christ by faith, we begin to enter into our inheritance for we obtain the pardon of sin. Some believers are not even sure that they have a present and perfect remission—but some of us know that we are, once and for all, “washed in the blood of the Lamb.” We know, therefore, in God’s eyes we are whiter than snow. But beyond that lies “acceptance in the Beloved,” which possibly we have not dared to claim. Hosts of professors are satisfied to be washed but have not yet asked to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Beloved, we are not only absolved but we are positively delightful unto God in Christ Jesus. He accepts our offerings, our prayers, our praises, and our heart’s love. Our name is Hephzibah, for the Lord delights in us. Pardon of sin is like the little Canaan that must be conquered. But why not advance to the wider regions of “accepted in the Beloved”? Brethren, let us walk in the light, as God is in the light and have fellowship with Him while the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleans us from all sin.

Think of another great blessing, namely, that of sonship. Beloved, we could sing heartily that hymn just now—

*“Behold what wondrous grace
The Father has bestowed
On sinners of a mortal race,
To call them sons of God!”*

But sonship is not all—“If children, then heirs, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.” Adoption you *must* have—heirship you ought to have. How rich you are since God Himself is yours—“heirs of

God"! Yes, God Himself is as truly yours as He is Christ's—"joint-heirs with Jesus Christ." Why are we naked and poor and miserable when we are heirs of a kingdom by reason of our adoption of the Lord? Let us take the good the Lord provides us.

Consider now the matter of regeneration. When we come to Christ by faith we are born again and made new creatures in Christ Jesus—this must be. But, brethren, when we are born again we perceive that the new birth begets a new life and that new life develops itself in the beauty of holiness. *Holiness* is the fruit of regeneration. Yet some imagine that they cannot be holy, at least not to any great extent. They believe that they can be saved from certain grosser evils but they cannot ascend to those glorious heights of consecration and sanctification without which the believer can never attain to the stature of a man in Christ Jesus. My message to you is, Arise, go over this Jordan and take possession of the larger inheritance. Take possession of it all—seek after holiness—follow on to know the Lord. Be not satisfied until you are conformed unto His image, who is "the First-born among many brethren." Aspire to the utmost God can give. You have not seen the goodly heights of Lebanon. As yet you are satisfied to stop at Jericho, by the river's brink, as if the conquest of one city had satisfied you. Gird on your harness and go forth to the fight—for the Lord is with you and the land is before you.

Again, as soon as a man has believed in Jesus he is safe. If you believe that Jesus is the Christ you are born of God. And, being born of God you come under the divine wing and the Lord shall preserve you from all evil. Many are satisfied that this is true but they do not, therefore, enter into peace as they should. That undisturbed serenity which springs from a sense of perfect safety in Christ Jesus is a glorious domain into which they do not enter. Our soul is made by faith to be as calm as the lake upon a summer's evening when the surface is unbroken by a ripple. Alas, we give way at times to doubt and fear and hardly know whether we are the Lord's people or not. This must not go on. We must have faith. But we may have, and we ought to have, the full assurance of faith; in full assurance lies the spring of perpetual serenity. The Lord can create in us habitual calm—in the midst of trouble He can give us joy; in the hour of struggle He can give us confidence. Oh rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him—then shall your times be free from disturbance and your days as the days of heaven upon the earth. It may be so if you have divine grace enough to claim the whole of the wide territory which the Lord has allotted you. Oh, for divine grace to cry—"Gilead is mine and Manasseh is mine! Over Edom will I cast out my shoe; who will bring me into the strong city? Who will lead me into Edom?" God will bring us where unaided nature can never enter.

Once more—when we come to Christ by faith we have communion with God. And this is a land that flows with milk and honey. Out of communion comes usefulness and there are certain ones who fancy that they can never be very useful. The Lord cannot do many mighty works through them because of their unbelief. They have to be fed with a spoon like invalid children. If they had but faith enough to receive power from on high by fuller communion with God they might become as David. There is no limit to the possibilities of usefulness in *any* man or woman when perfectly consecrated. Let us not imagine that we are doomed to small usefulness. That branch of the vine which up to now has yielded little or no fruit may yet be made by the heavenly Vinedresser to bring forth much fruit. By faith let the divine sap of grace be received. Let living graces bring the living Christ into us and then we shall bring forth clusters large as those which the spies brought from Eshcol of old. Thus much, then, concerning our survey of the goodly heritage of salvation. The land of promise is exceedingly broad.

Next, it is exceedingly desirable. The country into which Israel entered was of a very choice kind. Travelers in Palestine tell us that it is the world condensed. Within that narrow strip of territory you get plains and hills, frosts of winter and heats of summer. You find products both of semitropical and temperate zones. Palestine is the whole earth in miniature and all the advantages of all lands are gathered into it. It was, in Joshua's days, a place of extreme fertility—"A land that flows with milk and honey." Nor was this all—while it was fertile on the surface it was rich underneath. It was a land "whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you may dig brass." The useful metals were near at hand as was every other convenience. Besides being fertile and wealthy it was prepared for immediate habitation. The tribes had not to build houses—they inhabited what others had built. They had not to plant vineyards but to eat the fruit of former labors. All things were waiting for the true heirs of the land. Beloved, when

faith gets her heritage in Christ, she is brought into a wealthy place. When sin is driven out and we come to live in God's own land, then we find precious treasure. We dig and we are enriched. We have all things in Christ—yes, in Him we have all that our utmost want can require. As He has gone into heaven to prepare a place for us—so on earth He has already prepared—in the covenant of grace, everything that is needed for the way home. Why do we not take possession of that which He has prepared for us?

This heritage upon which we are now looking down from the summit of our faith is full of variety. In Palestine there were fertile plains and rich valleys between rising hills and towering mountains. It was a land of brooks and rivers, a land which the Lord God thought upon. It was, in those days, the joy of all the earth—it was as the garden of the Lord for exceeding excellence. Beloved, if you come to Christ you shall never need to go away from Him to find variety of joys. In His teaching you shall find Lebanons of sublime doctrine and Sharons of pleasant precept. Here are Hermons of experience, Tabors of communion, Jabboks of prevailing prayer, and Cheriths of divine providence. The revelation of God is a blessed country, full of all manner of delights. They that live in Christ dwell in spiritual realms which for light and joy are as heaven below. Above all things, it is “your land, O Immanuel!” That is the dearest name for the Canaan of divine grace. The saints' inheritance is the choicest form of life and peace and joy. We come to live *with* Christ, *in* Christ, *for* Christ, and *as* Christ—we rise in Him to fellowship with the Father and with the church of the First-born. One heart sympathizes with all the purposes of God, and we joy in God Himself. I cannot properly describe all this, but I live in the enjoyment of it. We live through our Lord and with our Lord. And this is life eternal. This is “the life which is life, indeed.” Compared with it, all other life is death. Divine grace is glory in the bud—it will be full-blown by-and-by. This privilege is enjoyed none the less because of daily affliction, bodily pain, opposition and reproach—it may even be enjoyed all the more because of these—if they are borne for Jesus' sake. Our light afflictions are like the black shadows of a picture which throw up the bright lights and set them out more vividly. Christ Jesus becomes more and more precious to us when we have a straitness of earthly things. Yet this promised portion may be enjoyed if we have abundance of earthly things. God may multiply your possessions. And if he gives you more of Himself at the same time, they will not harm you. As you find all in God when you are poor, you shall find God in all when you are rich. Your life consists not in what you possess, nor in what you lack. You shall find in Christ fullness, a soul-filling satisfaction. And this shall be a pledge of that something better which the Beloved has laid up in store for a still brighter day. What a word is that where we read of being “filled with all the fullness of God”! I do not think any man can exaggerate the possibilities that lie before believers. If any man shall draw a line and say he can go no further, I must take leave to blot out that line—where God has set no bound we will not allow a stop, lest we be found guilty of limiting the Holy One of Israel—

*“All our capacious powers can wish
In Christ does richly meet.”*

All that is in Christ is meant for all believers and therefore all believers may have all that is in Christ who is all in all. We should not be content with pennies when He endows us with pounds. No child of God could ever yet say, “I have taken all that God can give me and still I am wanting more.” God all-sufficient is our heritage, and He more than fills our deepest need, our highest aspiration. Thus have we surveyed our measureless inheritance.

II. I beg you, in the next place TO GLANCE AT THE TITLE DEEDS OF OUR INHERITANCE. We shall not require a lawyer to assist us in our examination. But if there should be here a legal critic who would like to overhaul our papers, he is welcome to do so. I would not mind exhibiting our title before the whole bench of judges, for it has no flaw in it and will stand in the highest court—yes, even in the last judgment. I have pleaded this incomparable title in several courts already and it has been found to convey to me a valid gift. Here is the title deed, “The land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.” It is repeated further on, “Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you.” This is an abstract of our title.

First, notice its covenant character. “I have given it to you.” The Lord had given it to them from of old when He promised it to their father Abraham. When the deep sleep fell upon Abraham and he saw the vision of the burning lamp and the smoking furnace, then the Lord gave to him the wide domain and

He mentions in detail all the tribes which then held the inner circle. You will find the full conveyance in the 15th chapter of Genesis, beginning at the 18th verse—"Unto your seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites and the Kenizzites and the Kadmonites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Rephaims and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." Thus they came into possession by an ancient deed of gift which entailed it upon them from generation to generation. I am glad that our tenure of the kingdom of divine grace is ancient and well established and that it is not so much with us, directly, as with One infinitely greater, with whom it stands fast forever. Had the covenant been made with me, individually, I should fear that my unworthiness would corrupt it. But it is made with One whose name forbids all fear of forfeiture. The covenant of grace is not made with you or with me individually because of our personal righteousness. But it is made with our Covenant Head and Representative whose life and death have sealed and ratified it. As the Lord could never run back from His promise to righteous Abraham, "In you and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," so will He never return from His promise which He gave to us in our blessed covenant head. He has given us an inheritance by an act of sovereign grace and not because of any goodness in ourselves. His gift will never be recalled since the ground of it never alters. Each believer may say, "He has in Christ Jesus made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: and therefore do I possess all spiritual blessings, and shall possess them world without end."

Observe, next, that this deed of gift is notable for its graciousness. What does it say? Which I do *sell* to them? Ah, no, it is no *sale* but a *free gift*. Does it say, "Which I do *offer* to them if they will earn it"? No, no—it is a present unconditional grant of sovereign love. Nothing is freer than a gift—"the gift of God is eternal life." He has given us all things for nothing, that we might behold the exceeding riches of His grace.

Note well the righteousness of our title—"Which I do *give* to them." The Lord God has a right to give what He pleases, for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." Of His own has He given unto us. In the great sacrifice of His dear Son He has satisfied all claims of justice and He acts justly when He blesses largely those for whom Jesus died. When a man has the free hold of his land, he has a right to give it away if so it pleases him—the Most High God is possessor of all things and when He says to His people, "I give you this," who shall dispute His right? The blessings of the covenant of grace are a royal gift—they come to us by divine right. Who shall question Jehovah's will? He asks peremptorily, "Shall I not do as I will with My own?" That which divine grace has given us is ours by a surer title than anything else can ever be.

Do not fail to see its sureness. He not only says, "I have given it," and in some other places, "I *will* give it," but He declares "I *do* give it." God gives Christ and His grace to us every day. The blessings of the covenant are continually fresh gifts of His hand. By two immutable things wherein it is impossible for God to lie, He has given the covenant possessions to us and if it were to be done again He would do it without hesitation. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." "I do give," says He, and thus He stands to His act and deed. O children of God, what do you think of your title deeds? You stand possessed of your kingdom by the gift of Him who has a right to give what He pleases. The kingdom is given to you because it is your Father's good pleasure to give it to you. Not only was it his good pleasure but it remains so. What great simpletons we are if we do not take possession of the brave country which is ceded to us! Does God give and do we decline to accept? Does God give and do we let the blessing lie untouched? O sheep, you well deserve to starve if you will not feed on the pastures into which the Good Shepherd leads you! The highest privileges of the covenant of grace are not the monopoly of advanced saints—they are the common property of all believers. A habit is growing up of saying, "Such-and-such a man is a saint." And then you set him up in a niche after the fashion of Rome. Are you not also a saint? You will never enter heaven unless you are. If you are a saint, why not take a saint's inheritance? "Oh, but certain chosen ones are the Lord's favorites!" What? Has He not also chosen you and favored you? If not, it will go hard with you. Well then, being yourselves favored and chosen, why do you not take hold upon the glorious estate which belongs to the chosen family? No part of Scripture is of private interpretation—no bit of the promised country may be hedged in as the peculiar

portion of a few. It all belongs to *all* the redeemed if they have but faith to make it their own. Do not hedge about the words spoken of the Lord and say, “Ah, He said that to Jacob.” Does not the Lord tell us by His servant Hosea that, “He found *him* in Bethel and there he spoke with *us*”? (Hosea 12:4). Although choice words were first of all spoken to this man or that, yet were they spoken for *all believing people* throughout all time. In the holy heritage all who have Christ have all that Christ brings with Him. “If children, then heirs”—not if grown-up children, not if comely children, nor if vigorous children but—“if children, then heirs.” If you are not children, what will become of you? But “if children, then heirs.” Come, brethren, bestir yourselves, and claim your heirship! Take possession of the whole territory of divine grace which the Lord has dedicated to your use!

III. Now I have brought you to the third point—LET US MAKE A MOVE TOWARDS OUR POSSESSION. There is your land but Jordan rolls between.

The first thing to do in this matter is to go over this Jordan. What do we mean? Out in the wilderness as a seeker, whose faith does not enter in, you are like a sheep which wanders from the fold and you find little rest. You are apt to be numbered with the Bedouin of the desert and not with the people of the Lord. Come out from the world and be separate. The land of gracious experience is meant for you to dwell in so that you may be recognized as the Lord’s peculiar people, separated unto the Most High. Are you ready to come right out—to be settled in Immanuel’s land—to break every link with “the world which lies in wickedness”? I have heard a great deal of talk about this separation but I have seen these very talkers hesitate when the decisive act of separation from false doctrine and unholy living has been expected of them. I pray you hear the divine voice which cries, “Come out from among them and be you separate, says the Lord and touch not the unclean thing. And I will receive you and will be a Father unto you and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” It is required of you in order to your full entrance into the grace state, that you take up a decided stand on the Lord’s side. On the other side of Jordan is your portion and not in the wilderness of Sin. Did I hear you say to yourself, “Suppose I am beaten?” Well, you cannot retreat from the land for there is no bridge over the Jordan. The river effectually bars all retreat. Are you willing to make a life decision? Will you draw the sword and burn the scabbard? It is death or glory with you. May you have divine grace to take the one irreversible step and be the Lord’s—wholly and only—forever! You can never take the kingdom of divine grace until with deliberate resolve you quit the sand of the desert for the soil of Canaan. A balloon cannot go up into the sky until the last rope is cut. Oh, for that sharp, decisive step, by which, like Abraham, you come out from your father’s house that you may be a sojourner with God in the land which His grace will show you!

Having decided for the Lord, you are next to take possession by an act of simple faith. The Lord says to you, “Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you.” This is an easy way of taking land—to put your foot down upon it. I delight in that word of the Lord to Jacob when he lay asleep, “The land whereon you lie, to you will I give it and to your seed.” If you can, by faith, lie down on a promise and find rest in it, it is yours. Every place in the grace country upon which the sole of your foot shall tread is yours. You will remember that the Red Indians agreed to sell to William Penn as much land as a man could walk round in a day. And I do not wonder that at the end of the day they complained that the white brother had made a big walk. I think I should have put my best leg foremost, if whatever I could put my foot upon would be mine—would not you? Why, then, do you not hurry up in *spiritual* matters? Do you value earthly things more than spiritual? Mark, then, that if you put your foot down upon a blessing and say, “This is mine,” it is yours. What a very simple operation is the claim of faith! You do not have to pass through the Universities to learn that—it is grasping with the hand or appropriating with the foot. Many of the Lord’s poor and unlearned ones obtain more from the promises than the more cultured ever do. The learned man lifts his head up, but the simple put their foot down. And this last is the way to the inheritance. By criticism you may put your foot *in* it, but by faith you put your foot *on* it. Strangers find fault, children claim. He that can trust his Lord may say, “In the name of the living God this blessing is mine.” Come, then, brothers and sisters, if there is a need for more holiness; put your foot on it. If you need more happiness, put your foot on it. If more usefulness is what

you want, put your foot on it. Lay your claim to all that is put within your reach in Scripture. This is the victory that overcomes the world and conquers Canaan—our faith!

But the Canaanite was there! Yes, I know. But you see, he had no right there—the Lord had outlawed him. The land was Israel's by the Lord's gift and they had a right to fight for the possession of their own estates. They first put their foot on it and it was theirs. And then they said to the aboriginal Canaanites, "Clear out!" The old nations had forfeited their lease through breach of covenant and they were, therefore, to give up possession to the incoming tenants, whose right was indefeasible. God's people are in conflict with sin and they carry out this war vigorously when they have first seen their right to the blessings of divine grace as given them by the living God. You may not claim a piece of land unless you are sure that it is really yours. You are a thief if you do. But when you are sure that an estate is rightfully yours, then you commence your action and strive to win it. In spiritual things waive no spiritual right. Say to sin that now mars your peace, "Peace is mine, clear out!" Say to sin that stops your usefulness, "That usefulness is mine, I claim it—clear out!" "Hivite, Jebusite, Girgashite—whatever sort of fellow you are—clear out of my heart and life for holiness is mine. God, the sovereign possessor of all things has given us our redeemed nature, to have and to hold for His glory, and we mean to have it!"

Each blessing is yours since you put the foot of faith upon it. But the actual enjoyment of it will need a struggle. War! War! War! With every Canaanite! Break their images and cut down their groves. They must be driven out at the sword's point. You have God's help with you in this holy battle. Your warfare will be accomplished, for the Lord Himself has said, "There shall not any man be able to stand before you all the days of your life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not fail you, nor forsake you."

I long to encourage you, my friends, to carry on this sacred crusade; I would have you grasp all which the hand of love holds out to you. Need I urge you? If there is such need, you are in a sorry way. I do not believe that if I should read from this pulpit that my friend John Smith had been left five thousand acres of land, I should have to follow him home to persuade him to go and look at it. If my sister yonder received a notification that a very nice little estate had been left her in the country, I do not believe I would need beg her to look after it. She would take an early train tomorrow morning to go and look over her farm. Brothers and sisters, here is an inheritance so broad and wide and lasting—why do you not hasten to take it? There is holiness, do you not want it? There is serenity, do you not desire it? There is joy unspeakable and full of glory, do you not wish for it? There is usefulness, do you not hunger for it?

This is the reason why some are so indifferent—they are ignorant—they do not even know that these choice blessings are to be had! All that any child of God was, you may be. All the joy and bliss and holiness ever enjoyed on earth, you may enjoy. The land is before you—go in and possess it. Do not be without the knowledge of Christ Jesus your Lord, for in Him is "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Some of our dear friends hear a doctrine which is gospel and water, and they really do not know what the undiluted gospel is. The doctrines of grace are the cream which many cautious preachers skim from the milk of the Word lest it should prove too rich for the stomachs of their hearers. A solid portion of Calvinistic doctrine is like a joint of nourishing meat, and the people of this generation are such babes that they cannot digest it. "It is too rich for me!" cries one. I know it, I know it, but I pray the Lord to make you grow into men who can enjoy the fat things full of marrow and the wines on the lees well refined. There are glorious truths of God of which beginners know nothing, and through not knowing of them they miss much joy. Full many a child of God goes fretting and worrying when he ought to be singing and rejoicing, and would be so if he knew what God has provided for him.

Many do not possess the land because of unbelief—

"Alas, it seems too good to be true"

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all."

Yes, that is quite true. But are you going to sing that one line forever? Is that your style of singing—one line forever? If our leader, just now, when we sang the hymn, had kept on with—"Behold, what wondrous grace!" "Behold, what wondrous grace!" it would have been very sweet—but I should have pulled his coat-tail and said, "Go on with the whole verse." So, in this case, you say—"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all." Why not go on to sing—

“But Jesus Christ is my all in all”?

You are empty but Jesus fills you. You are in prison but Jesus sets you at liberty. Why not rejoice in that liberty? The Lord deliver us from unbelief, for it is enough to shut any man out of the inheritance!

Many are indolent, Oh, the laziness of some of God’s people! I will not enlarge upon this matter; probably you know something about it yourselves.

Lastly, the indecision of a great many is another cause why they do not possess the land. There is a hesitancy to go up and seize it. They mean to be better Christians before they die. I wonder how many Christians here would like to finish their lives today! Would your life, if now ended, be a life worth living? Suppose it were now threatened to be cut short. Would you not pray with anguish, “Lord, let me live a little longer, that I may distribute more of my money to Your cause, may bear better testimony to Your truth and may set my house in order”? Set your house in order at once, my brothers and sisters. Give away a full portion of your substance immediately. Begin to work for Jesus at once. Why should you hesitate? You blame the sinner when he delays—surely the saint is to be blamed, too, when he also lingers.

I have done when I have said to any soul here that is seeking the Lord—if you today come in and accept the blessings of the covenant, you may have them and welcome. Do not say to yourself, “It will be a presumptuous thing for me to believe in Jesus.” It will be a kind of presumption which has no sin in it. If a rich man, in one of the famine-stricken districts of China were to say to his servant, “provide a great feast and set it out in the street.” And he were then to put up a notice to hungry Chinamen, “Whoever will may come,” I do not think that if I were a hungry Chinaman, I should keep away from the dinner from fear of presumption. I should go gladly and ask no questions—for my stomach’s sake—if for nothing else.

O poor, doubting sinner, you had better do the same. Feed freely and fear not. When God’s cry is, “Come and welcome,” come at once and ask no questions. Or if a question does arise, let your hunger answer and tell you that you must. God gives His grace freely—freely take it. Come, let us sing together that little ditty—

***“I do believe, I will believe,
That Jesus died for me;
And on the cross He shed His blood
From sin to set me free.”***

This will be a blessed morning for you if you can not only sing it, but carry it out at once by a simple faith in our living, risen, reigning Savior. God bless you, for Christ’s sake! Amen.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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